

**NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH)
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CHILD HEALTH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (NICHD)
REQUEST FOR QUOTATIONS (RFQ) NO. RM-2004-05**

**DEVELOPMENT OF A CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT OF A
NATIONAL CLINICAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATES PROGRAM**

INSTRUCTIONS, CONDITIONS, AND NOTICES TO QUOTERS

(03-18-2004)

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. BACKGROUND

This solicitation is developed as an NIH Roadmap initiative. All NIH Institutes and Centers participate in the Roadmap initiatives. The solicitation will be administered by the NICHD on behalf of the NIH. For more information on the NIH Roadmap, go to <http://nihroadmap.nih.gov/>

Clinical Research (CR) is the linchpin of the nation's biomedical research enterprise. To accelerate and strengthen the CR process, one set of NIH Roadmap initiatives will re-engineer the CR enterprise by developing a systematic infrastructure and foundation necessary for advancing CR. Over the years, CR has become more difficult to conduct. However, the exciting basic science discoveries currently being made demand that CR continue, and even expand, while striving to improve efficiency and better inform basic science efforts. Implementing this vision will require an enhanced information technology infrastructure (National Electronic Clinical Trials and Research [NECTAR] network), more efficient and effective Institutional Review Boards (IRBs), more efficient and productive clinical trial networks, and the human backbone of the National Clinical Research Associates Program, which will create a network of practitioners who will enroll and follow their patients in CR projects. The information technology, network integration/efficiency, and IRB issues are handled by other parts of the NIH Roadmap. At the core of this vision is the concept that CR needs to develop new partnerships among organized patient communities, community practitioners, large healthcare practitioner (HCP) networks, and academic researchers. The NCRA's would participate in clinical studies, assist in patient recruitment, administer experimental treatments, report data, and be among the first to integrate new research findings into routine healthcare delivery. The NCRA's would comprise a stable component of the CR infrastructure, ensuring that new infrastructure need not be recreated to accommodate each new research project. Through the development of a NCRA conceptual model and by exploring its feasibility, the NIH hopes to identify ways to enhance the conduct of clinical research.

NCRA's are expected to be healthcare practitioners (i.e., physicians, dentists, and nurse practitioners) who also function as clinical investigators by participating in CR (including clinical trials) in a practice setting. They will be primarily based in

community practices or community hospitals that are not affiliated with academic medical centers, although they may have privileges at hospitals that have university affiliations (even though they do not have university appointments). The NIH expects these HCPs will be principally working in primary care settings (e.g., family medicine, pediatrics, internal medicine, obstetrics/gynecology), or a limited range of specialties (defined below). The NCRA will also include academic healthcare providers, but they are not the focus of this Study.

2. OBJECTIVE

The ultimate objectives of this task order are to: 1) develop a Conceptual Model to articulate the objectives, approach, and scalability of the NCRA Program; 2) assess the feasibility of the Model, both broadly and in important sub-populations; 3) provide recommendations for development of the NCRA Program, including the design of pilot projects to test the feasibility/scalability of the Program; and 4) provide a final report. The Conceptual Model shall be flexible enough to include diverse patient populations, providers, and CR studies. It shall include predisposing factors, enabling factors, incentives, disincentives, and barriers to implementing, recruiting, and retaining NCRA. In addition to identifying barriers, the Contractor shall propose solutions for them. The NIH anticipates a highly complex, iterative, and interactive process to address these tasks. The NIH intends to publicly disseminate the Model and study report in both published and electronic format.

3. METHOD OF ACQUISITION

The Government intends to acquire the necessary services by awarding a Task Order under the General Services Administration (GSA) Federal Supply Service (FSS) Group 874 Schedule, *Management, Organization, and Business Improvement Services*, Special Item No. (SIN) 99.

This requirement is being processed under GSA's special ordering procedures in accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 8.402, which take precedence over the ordering procedures at FAR 8.404.

4. NUMBER OF AWARDS

It is anticipated that one award will be made from this solicitation.

5. DATE OF AWARD

It is anticipated that award will be made on or about June 1, 2004.

6. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

It is anticipated that the award made pursuant to this solicitation will be for a period of 18 months.

7. COMMITMENT OF PUBLIC FUNDS

The Contracting Officer is the only individual who can legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds in connection with the proposed acquisition. Any other commitment, either explicit or implied, is invalid.

8. COMMUNICATIONS PRIOR TO AWARD

Quoters shall direct all communications to the attention of:

Susan A. Nsangou
Contracting Officer
Contracts Management Branch
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
6100 Executive Boulevard, Suite 7A07
Rockville, Maryland 20892
Phone: 301-435-8867
Fax: 301-402-3676
nsangous@mail.nih.gov

Communications with other Government officials may compromise the integrity of this acquisition and result in cancellation of the requirement.

9. PREPARATION COSTS

This RFQ does not commit the Government to pay for the preparation and submission of a quotation.

B. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFERORS

1. INSTRUCTIONS TO VENDORS

(a) Definitions. As used in this provision—

Discussions are negotiations that occur that may, at the Contracting Officer's discretion, result in the quoter being allowed to revise its quotation.

In writing or written means any worded or numbered expression which can be read, reproduced, and later communicated, and includes electronically transmitted and stored information.

Quotation modification is a change made to a quotation before the solicitation's closing date and time, or made in response to an amendment, or made to correct a mistake at any time before award.

Quotation revision is a change to a quotation made after the solicitation closing date, at the request of or as allowed by a Contracting Officer as the result of negotiations.

Time, if stated as a number of days, is calculated using calendar days, unless

otherwise specified, and will include Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays. However, if the last day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, then the period shall include the next working day.

- (b) Amendments to solicitations. If this solicitation is amended, all terms and conditions that are not amended remain unchanged. Quoters shall acknowledge receipt of any amendment to this solicitation by the date and time specified in the amendment(s).
- (c) Submission, modification, revision, and withdrawal of quotations. (1) Unless other methods (e.g., electronic commerce or facsimile) are permitted in the solicitation, quotations and modifications to quotations shall be submitted in paper media in sealed envelopes or packages (i) addressed to the office specified in the solicitation, and (ii) showing the time and date specified for receipt, the solicitation number, and the name and address of the quoter. Quoters using commercial carriers should ensure that the quotation is marked on the outermost wrapper with the information in paragraphs (c)(1)(i) and (c)(1)(ii) of this provision.

(2) The first page of the quotation must show--

- (i) The solicitation number;
- (ii) The name, address, and telephone and facsimile numbers of the quoter (and electronic address if available);
- (iii) A statement specifying the extent of agreement with all terms, conditions, and provisions included in the solicitation and agreement to furnish any or all items upon which prices are offered at the price set opposite each item;
- (iv) Names, titles, and telephone and facsimile numbers (and electronic addresses if available) of persons authorized to negotiate on the quoter's behalf with the Government in connection with this solicitation; and
- (v) Name, title, and signature of person authorized to sign the quotation. Quotations signed by an agent shall be accompanied by evidence of that agent's authority, unless that evidence has been previously furnished to the issuing office.

(3) Late quotations and revisions. (i) Any quotation received at the office designated in the solicitation after the exact time specified for receipt of quotes will not be considered unless it is received before award is made and--

(A) It was sent by registered or certified mail not later than the fifth calendar day before the date specified for receipt of quotations (e.g., a quotation submitted in response to a solicitation requiring receipt of offers by the 20th of the month must have been mailed by the 15th);

(B) It was sent by mail (or telegram or facsimile, if authorized) or

hand-carried (including delivery by a commercial carrier) if it is determined by the Government that the late receipt was due primarily to Government mishandling after receipt at the Government installation;

- (C) It was sent by U.S. Postal Service Express Mail Next Day Service-Post Office to Addressee, not later than 5:00 p.m. at the place of mailing two working days prior to the date specified for receipt of quotations. The term ``working days" excludes weekends and U.S. Federal holidays;
 - (D) It was transmitted through an electronic commerce method authorized by the solicitation and was received at the initial point of entry to the Government infrastructure not later than 5:00 p.m. one working day prior to the date specified for receipt of quotations; or
 - (E) There is acceptable evidence to establish that it was received at the activity designated for receipt of quotations and was under the Government's control prior to the time set for receipt of quotations, and the Contracting Officer determines that accepting the late quotation would not unduly delay the procurement; or
 - (F) It is the only quotation received.
- (ii) Any modification or revision of a quotation or response to request for information, including any final quotation revision, is subject to the same conditions as in subparagraphs (c)(3)(i)(A) through (c)(3)(i)(E) of this provision.
 - (iii) The only acceptable evidence to establish the date of mailing of a late quotation or modification or revision sent either by registered or certified mail is the U.S. or Canadian Postal Service postmark both on the envelope or wrapper and on the original receipt from the U.S. or Canadian Postal Service. Both postmarks must show a legible date or the quotation, response to a request for information, or modification or revision shall be processed as if mailed late. ``Postmark" means a printed, stamped, or otherwise placed impression (exclusive of a postage meter machine impression) that is readily identifiable without further action as having been supplied and affixed by employees of the U.S. or Canadian Postal Service on the date of mailing. Therefore, quoters or respondents should request the postal clerk to place a legible hand cancellation bull's eye postmark on both the receipt and the envelope or wrapper.
 - (iv) Acceptable evidence to establish the time of receipt at the Government installation includes the time/date stamp of that installation on the quotation wrapper, other documentary evidence

of receipt maintained by the installation, or oral testimony or statements of Government personnel.

- (v) The only acceptable evidence to establish the date of mailing of a late quotation, modification or revision, or withdrawal sent by Express Mail Next Day Service-Post Office to Addressee is the date entered by the post office receiving clerk on the ``Express Mail Next Day Service-Post Office to Addressee" label and the postmark on both the envelope or wrapper and on the original receipt from the U.S. Postal Service. ``Postmark" has the same meaning as defined in paragraph (c)(3)(iii) of this provision, excluding postmarks of the Canadian Postal Service. Therefore, quoters or respondents should request the postal clerk to place a legible hand cancellation bull's eye postmark on both the receipt and the envelope or wrapper.
 - (vi) Notwithstanding paragraph (c)(3)(i) of this provision, a late modification or revision of an otherwise successful quotation that makes its terms more favorable to the Government will be considered at any time it is received and may be accepted.
 - (vii) Quotations may be withdrawn by written notice or telegram (including mailgram) received at any time before award. If the solicitation authorizes facsimile quotations, quotations may be withdrawn via facsimile received at any time before award, subject to the conditions specified in the provision entitled "Facsimile Proposals." Quotations may be withdrawn in person by a quoter or an authorized representative, if the representative's identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt for the quotation before award.
 - (viii) If an emergency or unanticipated event interrupts normal Government processes so that quotations cannot be received at the office designated for receipt of quotations by the exact time specified in the solicitation, and urgent Government requirements preclude amendment of the solicitation or other notice of an extension of the closing date, the time specified for receipt of quotations will be deemed to be extended to the same time of day specified in the solicitation on the first work day on which normal Government processes resume. If no time is specified in the solicitation, the time for receipt is 4:30 p.m., local time, for the designated Government office.
- (4) Quotations submitted must be on an all-or-none basis, i.e., quotations that propose to provide any item or combination of items shall be determined to be nonresponsive.
 - (5) Quotations submitted in response to this solicitation must be in English and in U.S. dollars.

- (6) Quoters may submit modifications to their quotations at any time before the solicitation closing date and time, and may submit modifications in response to an amendment, or to correct a mistake at any time before award.
 - (7) Quoters may submit revised quotations only if requested or allowed by the Contracting Officer.
 - (8) Quotations may be withdrawn at any time before award. Withdrawals are effective upon receipt of notice by the Contracting Officer.
- (d) Quotation expiration date. Quotations in response to this solicitation will be valid for a period of 60 calendar days.
- (e) Restriction on disclosure and use of data. Quoters that include in their quotations data that they do not want disclosed to the public for any purpose, or used by the Government except for evaluation purposes, shall--
- (1) Mark the title page with the following legend: "This quotation includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the Government and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed--in whole or in part--for any purpose other than to evaluate this quotation." If, however, a purchase order is awarded to this quoter as a result of--or in connection with-- the submission of this data, the Government shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting purchase order. This restriction does not limit the Government's right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets [insert numbers or other identification of sheets]; and
 - (2) Mark each sheet of data it wishes to restrict with the following legend: Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this quotation.
- (f) Task order award. (1) The Government intends to award a task order to the responsible quoter whose quotation represents the best value after an evaluation is conducted in accordance with the factors and subfactors in the solicitation.
- (2) The Government may reject any or all quotations if such action is in the Government's best interests.
 - (3) The Government may waive informalities and minor irregularities in quotations received.
 - (4) The Government shall evaluate quotations and may award a task order without discussions with quoters (except clarifications as described in FAR 15.306(a)). Therefore, the quoter's initial quotation should represent the quoter's best terms from a cost or price and technical standpoint. The

Government reserves the right to conduct discussions if the Contracting Officer later determines them to be necessary.

- (5) The Government reserves the right to make an award on any item for a quantity less than the quantity quoted, at the unit cost or prices quoted, unless the quoter specifies otherwise in the quotation.
- (6) Exchanges with quoters after receipt of a quotation do not constitute a rejection or counteroffer by the Government.
- (7) The Government may determine that a quotation is unacceptable if the prices proposed are materially unbalanced between line items or subline items. Unbalanced pricing exists when, despite an acceptable total evaluated price, the price of one or more line items is significantly overstated or understated as indicated by the application of cost or price analysis techniques. A quotation may be rejected if the Contracting Officer determines that the lack of balance poses an unacceptable risk to the Government.

2. POTENTIAL AWARD WITHOUT DISCUSSIONS

The Government reserves the right to award a task order without discussions if the Contracting Officer determines that the initial offer is fair and reasonable and that discussions are not necessary.

3. ORDERING TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- a. The quoter must specify the unit price for each GSA FSS Group 874 Item Number quoted in response to this solicitation.
- b. Prices quoted for this RFQ shall be GSA FSS Group 874 prices, or lower prices. The quoter must cite its FSS contract number. The quoter must also provide a copy of its FSS contract's price list with its quote.
- c. Prices quoted shall be fixed unit prices (per labor hour) per labor category.
- d. The quoter must indicate the Quantity, Item, and Trade Discounts being quoted for each line item.
- e. The quoter must indicate a period of delivery, citing the number of days after receipt of a task order document in which delivery will be performed.

4. TASK ORDER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Any task order awarded shall be subject to the terms and conditions of the vendor's GSA FSS Group 874 contract that shall be incorporated by reference in the task order. In addition, any task order awarded shall be subject to the attached Terms and Conditions Addendum.

5. PRIVACY ACT

The Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579) requires that a Federal agency advise each individual from whom it asks to supply information, the authority which authorizes the solicitation, whether disclosure is voluntary or mandatory, the principal purpose for which the information is intended to be used, the uses outside the agency which may be made of the information, and the effects on the individual, if any, of not providing all or any part of the requested information.

The NIH is requesting the information called for in this RFQ pursuant to the authority provided by Sec. 301(a)(7) of the Public Health Service Act, as amended, and P.L. 92-218, as amended.

Providing the information requested is entirely voluntary. The collection of this information is for the purpose of conducting an accurate, fair, and adequate review prior to a discussion as to whether to award a purchase order.

Failure to provide any or all of the requested information may result in a less than adequate review.

In addition, the Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579, Section 7) requires that the following information be provided when individuals are requested to disclose their social security number.

Provision of the social security number is voluntary. Social security numbers are requested for the purpose of accurate and efficient identification, referral, review and management of NIH acquisition programs. Authority for requesting this information is provided by Section 301 and Title IV of the PHS Act, as amended.

The information provided by you may be routinely disclosed for the following purposes:

- to the cognizant audit agency and the General Accounting Office for auditing.
- to the Department of Justice as required for litigation.
- to respond to congressional inquiries.
- to qualified experts, not within the definition of Department employees, for opinions as a part of the review process.

6. SELECTION OF VENDOR

You are advised that an award of a task order will be made to the GSA FSS Group 874 vendor that the Government determines to represent the best value and results in the lowest overall cost alternative (considering price, special features, administrative costs, etc.) to meet the Government's needs. The evaluation criteria to be used by the Government are described in E., EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD, below.

7. ALTERNATE PROPOSALS

You may, at your discretion, submit an alternate proposals, or proposals which deviate from the Government's requirements; provided, that you also submit a proposal for performance of the work as specified in the statement of work. Such proposals may be considered if overall performance would be improved or not compromised and if they are in the best interests of the Government. Alternative proposals, or any deviations from any requirements of this solicitation, must be clearly identified.

8. NUMBER OF COPIES OF QUOTATION

Your quotation shall be organized as specified in Section B., GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFERORS; Section C., INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING THE TECHNICAL PORTION OF THE QUOTATION; and Section D., INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING THE BUSINESS PORTION OF THE QUOTATION; and submitted in an original hard-copy and five (5) copies no later than 12:00 p.m., local prevailing time on April 6, 2004 to the following:

Susan A. Nsangou
Contracting Officer
Contracts Management Branch
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, NIH
6100 Executive Boulevard, Suite 7A07
Bethesda, MD 20892-7510
nsangous@mail.nih.gov

In addition to hard copies, the vendor shall provide a copy by electronic mail (e-mail) to the above Contracting Officer by the due date and time stated above.

9. TASK ORDER TYPE

The Government intends to award a single fixed-price type task order as a result of this solicitation (reference Federal Acquisition Regulation Subpart 16.5).

10. ORAL PRESENTATIONS

You are advised that offerors responding to this solicitation may be invited to provide oral presentations to the Government after the Government completes its initial evaluation of your proposal.

11. ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

- a. GSA Contract
- b. Task Order

C. INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING THE TECHNICAL PORTION OF THE QUOTATION

1. PREPARING THE TECHNICAL PORTION OF THE QUOTATION

The offeror shall include in its quotation a discussion of the offeror's proposed technical approach to respond to the requirements in the Statement of Work. The offeror should limit its technical response to 40 pages; excluding resumes and project summaries. Responses should outline the proposed technical approach; required labor skill sets, hours, and labor costs, and other direct costs for performing the Statement of Work.

In addition to submitting a discussion of its proposed technical approach, the offeror shall include up to three two-page project descriptions or summaries describing experience and successes (results) on requirements similar to this solicitation that the offeror has successfully performed in the past five years. The information presented shall be in sufficient detail to describe the previous experience and effectiveness of the offeror in similar or closely related work, and to demonstrate the offeror's current ability to accomplish the tasking in this solicitation. Include the following information for each contract and subcontract:

- Name of contract or project;
- Contract Number;
- Role (Prime or Subcontractor);
- Sponsoring Organization or Company;
- Contract type;
- Period of Performance;
- Total Contract Value;
- Contract Manager and telephone number;
- Program Manager and telephone number;
- Project description, scope of work preformed, services or products delivered;
- Major success or accomplishments, and
- Major problems, lessons learned, and solution(s) applied if applicable.

Resumes: In addition to the above submissions, the offeror shall include in its response to the statement of work a resume for each key person proposed for the project. Resumes of management, technical, and support staff necessary to provide the services and support requested shall also be included. Individual resumes shall be no more than two pages in length.

Resumes shall include the following:

- Name of person;
- Proposed position, function, or role;
- Proposed labor category;
- Education (including, in reverse chronological order, colleges and/or technical schools attended (with dates), degree(s)/certification(s) received, major field(s) of study, and approximate number of total class hours);
- Experience (including, in reverse chronological order, area(s) of work in which a person is qualified, company and title of position, approximate starting and ending dates (month/year), concise descriptions of experience for each

- position held, and
- Certification that the information contained in the resume is correct and accurate.

2. LABOR CATEGORIES AND DESCRIPTIONS

The Government anticipates the following labor categories and descriptions to perform the services:

Senior Officer/Principal Investigator/Senior Project Manager - A Master's level individual with experience in managing large, complex feasibility assessments that include consultants, subcontractors, and multiple research sites. Experience/education in business plus technical subject-matter expertise relevant to the procurement preferred.

Project Director - An individual with a PhD or MD and extensive experience managing qualitative research in a clinical setting within both academic health centers and community healthcare practice. Expertise in conceptual model development and testing is essential.

Social Scientist - A PhD-level Psychologist or Social Scientist to be involved in planning and designing the feasibility assessment and conceptual model; developing methodology, implementing the studies, planning analyses, and interpreting results. Expertise in qualitative research in a clinical practice setting, including on the determinants of physician motivation/behavior is essential.

Statistician: A PhD-level statistician to be involved in planning and designing the feasibility assessment and conceptual model; developing methodology, planning analyses, and interpreting results. The individual shall have expertise in qualitative study design and analysis.

Research Associate: Master's level research associate to assist in project implementation, gathering and analyzing data, and developing reports. Experience in behavioral/social sciences essential.

Data Entry/Administrative Assistant: Minimum of high school diploma and expertise in data entry, typing, other office skills.

3. ANTICIPATED LABOR HOURS

The Government anticipates, during the 18-month period of performance, utilizing the anticipated labor hours as below:

Labor Category	Anticipated Total Number of Hours
Senior Project Manager	468
Project Director	2,340
Social Scientist	2,080
Statistician	312
Research Associate	3,120
Research Associate	2,080
Data Entry	2,600

4. EVALUATION OF THE TECHNICAL PORTION OF QUOTATIONS

The technical portion of quotations will be evaluated in accordance with the factors, weights, and order of relative importance as described in E. EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD below.

5. ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING THE TECHNICAL PORTION OF THE QUOTATION

- a. Quotations which merely offer to conduct the work in accordance with the requirements of the Government's scope of work will be considered nonresponsive. The quoter must submit an explanation of the proposed technical approach in conjunction with the tasks to be performed in achieving the project objectives.
- b. Evaluation of the technical portion of quotations will be conducted by a technical review committee in accordance with the evaluation criteria stated in E. EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD below.

D. INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING THE BUSINESS PORTION OF THE QUOTATION

1. PRICE INFORMATION

Quoters shall submit a detailed breakdown of estimated labor hours and rates by task areas to be performed (reference attached statement of work). In addition, a summary total amount shall be furnished for the entire project.

The business portion of the quotation must contain sufficient information to allow the Government to perform a basic analysis of the proposed price of the work.

2. INFORMATION OTHER THAN PRICING DATA

The vendor shall submit sufficiently detailed information to permit the Contracting Officer and/or his/her Government authorized representatives to evaluate the offer.

Unless otherwise stated in this solicitation, the information may be submitted in the quoter's own format.

3. PRICING

The vendor shall clarify for each line item if the unit price represents the vendor's negotiated GSA FSS Group 874 price, or lower price.

4. UNIFORM COST ASSUMPTIONS

The Government is providing the below uniform cost assumptions *for proposal purposes only*.

Travel: 24 trips of 3 days duration for 3 staff at an estimated not-to-exceed amount of \$2,400 per person. The purpose of the travel is for data collection and meetings with Government staff and an anticipated Panel of Experts.

For proposal purposes only, the quoters shall assume 6 trips to the following destinations: San Diego, California, Chicago, Illinois, Houston, Texas and Atlanta, Georgia.

Consultant: The Government anticipates utilizing the below category as consultant only.

Clinical Researcher: An MD, DDS, or PhD-level nurse-practitioner with extensive experience in clinical research that involved community practitioners, as well as expertise in the determinants of physician motivation/behavior.

5. SPECIAL BUSINESS PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS - NEGOTIATED OPTIONAL LOGISTICAL SUPPORT SERVICES

The Government anticipates approximately four meetings or teleconferences with the Panel of Experts for the Tasks and Subtasks detailed in the Statement of Work. The optional logistical support services include: travel, honoraria, per diem, conference calls and regional and/or national workshops.

E. EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD

1. GENERAL

You are advised that an award of a task order will be made to the GSA FSS Group 874 vendor whose quotation is determined by the Government to represent the best value and results in the lowest overall cost alternative (considering price, special features, administrative costs, etc.) to meet the Government's needs.

2. EVALUATION OF OPTIONS

It is anticipated that any task order awarded from this RFQ will contain option provision(s) and period(s).

In accordance with FAR Clause 52.217-5, Evaluation of Options (July 1990), the Government will evaluate quotes for award purposes by adding the total price for all options to the total price for the basic requirement, except when it is determined in

accordance with FAR 17.206(b) not to be in the Government's best interests. Evaluation of options will not obligate the Government to exercise the option(s).

3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each offeror's submission will be evaluated based solely on the content of submitted technical and cost proposals. Technical factors are of paramount consideration in the award of the task order; however, cost is also important to the overall award decision.

All evaluation factors other than cost, when combined, are significantly more important than cost. The Government can make tradeoffs among cost and technical factors in determining which vendor offers the best value by awarding to other than the lowest cost offeror or other than the highest technically rated offeror. Offerors are advised that award will be made to that offeror whose proposal provides the best value to the Government.

In determining which offer represents the best value and results in the lowest overall cost alternative (considering price, special features, administrative costs, etc.) to meet the Government's needs, the Government shall evaluate responses using the following evaluation criteria that are listed in descending order of priority:

A. Understanding the Requirements/Technical Approach (40 Points)

Quality, innovativeness, and clarity of the methodological approach to the development of the Conceptual Model for NCRA program and all other delineated tasks. Cost-effectiveness and timeliness of approach to get the information necessary to develop the Conceptual Model and test the feasibility of the Model and the Program. Understanding of the Government's intent for this procurement and the feasibility of approach to address its overall goals. Understanding of the requirements of the NCRA Program and potential barriers to its implementation. Evidence of ability to access and enlist the cooperation of targeted stakeholder groups within the specified time frame. Soundness of approach to incorporate Government and outside expert input on the project, including quality and flexibility of proposed process for substantive iterative interactions. Evidence of ability to accomplish milestones within the specified timeframe. Soundness of plans for representation of women and minorities in the Conceptual Model, both in community practitioners and their patient populations.

B. Personnel/Staff Qualifications (40 Points)

Qualifications, experience and availability of all proposed personnel, including any consultants and/or subcontractors, and evidence of substantial experience in the diverse range of skills required for this project: documented expertise in study design, conceptual model building, feasibility and scalability assessment, data analysis and presentation; demonstrated expertise in and peer-reviewed publication record on clinical research in the context of patient care, particularly as it relates to community medical practice, the impact of managed care, the translation of scientific knowledge

from bench to bedside, and other relevant studies. Augmentation of staff with appropriate consultants, and/or subcontractors, as necessary, and their documented expertise and commitment to the project. Evidence that proposed team can accomplish tasks in specified timeframe.

C. Organizational Capabilities, Experience and Commitment; Facilities and Resources (20 Points)

Evidence of corporate capability to organize and manage resources and personnel effectively. Evidence of corporate experience and success in study design, conceptual model building, feasibility and scalability assessment, and data analysis/presentation on a scale comparable to the needs of this procurement. For any subcontractor(s) proposed, effectiveness and timeliness of management plan in specifying responsibilities allocated to each organization and how these entities shall interact. Adequacy of mechanisms in place to hire technically qualified staff on a quick turnaround basis, as needed, and to ensure that personnel assigned to a project are retained during the entire project. Adequacy of the organizational headquarters, research offices, information technology resources, and other infrastructure proposed for this project. Assurances that the facilities needed for the project are currently available or that they shall be available at the time of Contract award. Corporate commitment to quality of product and deployment of necessary resources to meet the project requirements

F. ATTACHMENTS TO THE RFQ

1. Statement of Work
2. Terms and Conditions Addendum
3. References